

SCOTT COUNTY KICKER

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NO 18

FORCING ITSELF TO THE FRONT.

The Homeless Farmer Begins to Stir.--Renters' Union, Originating in Texas, Beginning to Spread.

The land question is a pressing issue in this country. There is one way of enslaving the masses that beats all others, and that is the monopoly of the land. Man cannot live without land any more than a fish can live without water. Hence when a few get control of the land the many must pay the privilege of living upon it.

You who read have read much in past years about the famines in Ireland and in India. Both of these countries have ideal climates, the soil is rich and the people produce in abundance. Both countries are under English rule and the land is owned by the English nobility. And it is these English parasites who take so much of what the Irish and Indians produce that the producers actually starve.

How about us free born American suckers? Oh, we have exactly the same land laws. We copied from England. And we are getting in the same fix as the Irish and the Indians. Some people see this and are trying to check it, but they are comparatively few in numbers and are denounced and persecuted by the "better class."

As a beginning in Missouri the people voted an amendment to the constitution four years ago authorizing the people to initiate laws that the legislature refused to enact and submit them to the people. Last fall the single tax amendment was thus submitted and it came near scaring the landlords out of their boots. But because of the ignorance of the masses, and with the assistance of an owned and kept press and, in many instances, the pulpit the landlords won out handsomely.

What next? Oh, they just went up to Jefferson City, had their "progressive" legislature to enact laws making the initiative and referendum more difficult of application, and to submit an amendment TO EXEMPT FROM ITS APPLICATION THE SINGLE TAX.

What do you think of that for a people's legislature?

At first it was urged to wipe out the whole thing, but I guess they concluded that that might wake somebody up. So they decided to submit the proposition to the people in the form of a constitutional amendment.

Hence next year you will be called upon to say by your ballot that you are too ignorant to pass on the matter of taxing land and that the right to do so ought not to be granted to you--and a majority of you will go up and vote to deny yourselves this right.

Down in Texas tenantry has become so alarming and oppressive that the tenants and small home owners have been forced to organize a renters union. The organization is being extended and Oklahoma is now being organized. It may reach Missouri later--for if the tenants of Texas and Oklahoma are worse off than the tenants of Southeast Missouri, they must be in a very bad fix. In a recent issue of the Texas Rebel the organ of the Renters Union, the following program, which it calls the "Renters' Catechism," appears:

Q. What is the Renters' Union? A. It is an organization of men and women who till the soil and do not rent out land to their fellowmen.

Q. Can a man who owns land belong to it? A. Yes, provided he does not use the land to exploit his fellowman.

Q. What does the union seek to accomplish? A. It proposes to abolish the bogus system, high rents, and all other means of decreasing the share of the commodities produced by the tillers of the soil; to secure legislative enactments that will tax all land held for speculative purposes to its full rental value; it strives to educate its membership to a thorough understanding of their economic and political status in society; it will develop co-operative enterprises related to the farm that will improve the material condition of its members; it proposes, by a system of education, agitation and organization to promote the material and moral welfare of those who actually work the land.

Q. Why is the Renters' Union organized at this time? A. There are several reasons: First, this is an age of organization. Men and women in all walks of life are organizing now. The lawyer has his bar association; the business man his commercial association; the mechanic his labor and industrial unions; the doctor his medical association; the preacher his conference, and so on. These men are intelligent enough to realize that in this complex age in which we live individual effort amounts to naught; that men must band with their brothers in their respective trades, professions and industries if they would improve their conditions. Hence the renter must organize or stand branded in the eyes of organized society as an incapable fellow who is lower than the negro boot-blacks of the cities, who have a strong organization. Believing that they are the peers

of their brothers everywhere the wisest and most progressive of them have organized a union thru which they will demand justice for themselves and their loved ones.

Q. Have the renters suffered because of their failure to organize before now? A. Yes, because each decade since the war finds tenantry with all its attendant evils, increasing. Five per cent of the cultivated acres of Texas was operated by renters in 1870; fifty per cent in 1890; 71 per cent today. In 1890 there were 95,510 renters; in 1910 they had increased to 210,575--an increase of 120 per cent. Every tendency of the times points to ever more tenantry, and every step in this direction is a step toward peonage under an inevitable bloody revolution if this tendency is not checked.

Q. What immediate steps are you taking to check it?

A. Already the national secretary of the Renters' Union and the executive board have prepared a petition to the legislature, which contains tens of thousands of names requesting that the state constitution be so amended that all land held out of cultivation shall be taxed to its full rental value. If the present legislature fails to submit the amendment it will certainly be submitted to a vote of the people as soon as the new initiative and referendum law goes into effect.

Q. What would be the result of the passage of such a constitutional amendment?

A. It would cause millions of acres of land now held out of cultivation for speculative purposes to be thrown on the market. The monopoly of land would cease in Texas and the 210,000 tenants, that with their families amount to 1,000,000 souls, would become home owners.

Q. How much land do you estimate is held out of cultivation in Texas now?

A. At least four-fifths. The Texas Welfare Commission says there are 167,000,000 acres of land in Texas and only 27,000,000 acres are cultivated. Eliminating mountains, rivers, streams, rough, rocky and uncultivated land there are over 100,000,000 acres of rich virgin soil that has never felt the touch of a plough. This is enough to give every tenant in Texas a farm equal in area to 456 acres of rich land on which to build a home.

Q. What other benefits would accrue to the people besides the securing of homes?

A. The wealth of the state would be enormously increased. There would not be an idle man in Texas who was willing to work. Wealth would climb in every part of the state and the cost of living be enormously reduced. Every child would receive a thorough education, which is its natural right. With the influx of wealth there would come the most improved agricultural machinery of all descriptions. The women would be taken out of the cotton patch; irrigation enterprises would be developed, and droughts to a large extent be eliminated.

Q. Why are you so confident that these blessings can come to the state by the passage of this amendment?

A. Because Germany has 211,000 square miles and 65,000,000 people and the land has been in cultivation for over 300 years. Texas has 266,000 square miles of land, 4,000,000 people, and four-fifths of the land is productive virgin soil. Hold on to the fact with hooks NOW! This virgin soil can feed 150,000,000 people, says the Galveston Daily News, and it tells the truth for once in its life.

Q. Do the land monopolists of Texas hold very large tracts of land? A. Yes; Mrs. King owns 1,400,000 acres in Nueces county; Mr. Taft owns 300 sections in San Jacinto; Mr. Wagner owns 800,000 acres in the Panhandle; the owners of the Capital Ranch own 3,000,000 acres; Col. Slaughter has 600,000 acres. These are but a few of the owners of great tracts in Texas.

Q. How do the large owners get possession of these great tracts?

A. By violence, force fraud and cunning; by perjury and chicanery. Some land was taken up in the names of horses and mules; some in the names of cowboys and hired hands. One owner in Wharton county has a large tract in the name of a female dog. The land commissioner's office in Austin, if investigated, would reveal the fact that most of the large tracts of land have been secured in this manner. Indeed, Land Commissioner Roberts, in his last annual report, asserted that these were the methods employed to take the land away from the people.

Q. Is all the land of Texas now in private hands?

A. Yes, except a couple million acres in the mountains of Brewster and adjoining counties that are practically worthless.

Q. Will these landholders place their property on the market if this constitutional amendment does NOT pass?

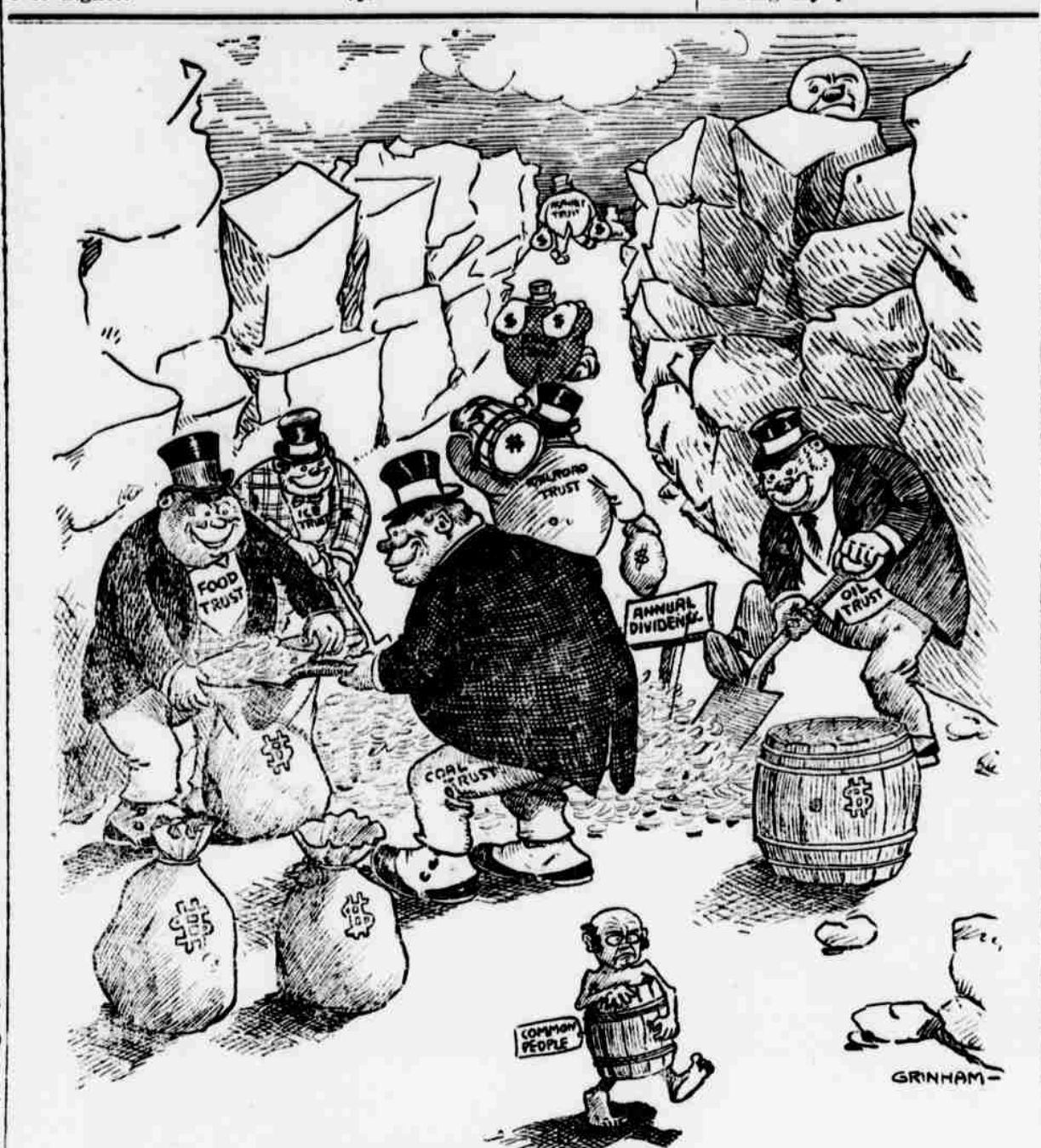
A. No; because land is a fixed quantity. You can't make any

more land. The population is constantly increasing by the natural growth within the state and immigration from without. Hence the demand for land is always growing and the price soaring ever higher.

WHAT DESTROYS THE HOME?
The manner in which the worker's home is protected under Capitalism is well illustrated by the report of the Municipal Court of Chicago, which shows that on an average 35,000 cases for the eviction of tenants are annually filed in that court alone. Ten thousand and cases are filed in the other courts and 5,000 families are evicted without court processes. This makes a total of 50,000 evictions each year, or about 120,000 people.

The American workers have practically become a homeless nation under capitalism. They spend their lives wandering from place to place in search of a home and yet the capitalist class--landlords, bankers, manufacturers and merchants, and parasites generally, have the impudence to declare that SOCIALISM would destroy the home!

Aw, come on! Don't be so slow about it. That \$10 gold piece is burning my pocket.



"DIVIDING UP."

HE'S RADICAL AGAIN.

Between campaigns Bro. Ake of the In County Register, gets very radical, but when the party lash is swung over his shoulders he meekly steps into the harness and whistles for up for "the party" that stands for the very things he condemns between campaigns. Then there is my friend Frank McGuire of the Jackson Casbook. From now until the next campaign you will find him devoting his excellent talents to the denunciation of the liquor traffic. But when the election rolls round you will see him lining up and voting the same ticket as the distillers, brewers and saloon men.

Bro. Ake can give the plumes some very hard knocks between campaigns. But on election day he lines up and votes the same ticket as the profit mongers and landlords. Here is a little radicalism taken from his last issue:

"As to the single tax, brethren, let's consider it. Every large land owner, grown wealthy from the rapidly increasing value of his holdings, is against it. Show me a man possessed of thousands of acres and I will show you one who goes into convulsions every time the single tax is named. Last year he frightened the homestead owners into voting against it, but he will never again control them so unanimously. For the people are thinking--thinking--which is apt to make trouble for entrenched injustice."

Why didn't you talk that way last fall, Bro. Ake, when it would have done some good? You knew then where the landlords stood. But your party declared against the single tax in its platform--just as the Republican party did--and you swallowed it! And it was not ignorance of the question that caused you not to advocate what your better judgment told you was right and just. Here is some more from Bro. Ake's pen:

"When I consider the billions upon billions of dollars of debt owed by the various governments--debts they do not hope to ever pay--the involuntary thought occurs itself, 'Wouldn't it be the wisest thing to wipe the figures off the board and begin the world anew?' As it is now, every child born comes into existence with a GAILING YOKE about its neck. It may be high treason to say so, but, gentle sirs, it is a condition that will not be permitted to last forever."

Aw, come on, Bro. Ake. There is but one landing place for those who see as far as it is evident you see. Make up your mind to get along without those commercial and bank advertisements and the county printin', and throw your weight on the side of humanity. And if Bro. Ake will fall in line he will be relieved of having to vote the same ticket as William J. Lamp. He can then be consistent.

A FRONTRIDING ARGUMENT

By Ralph Korngold
What is the most formidable argument in the whole range of Socialist philosophy?

There are many formidable arguments; but there is one which the opponents of Socialism can't even make a bluff at answering.

It is the argument about the inevitability of Socialism.

Most Socialists are acquainted with this argument.

Of course, every one knows that the worker produces a surplus over and above the amount of his wages.

With this wages the working class is therefore able to buy back only a part of its products.

The capitalist class, being a small class, can not possibly consume the remainder, or use it all up in riotous living, and must, therefore, find a foreign market for it.

Now the foreign markets of the world are limited. In fact have almost disappeared. Most other lands, instead of being markets, are themselves seeking outlets, having conditions of distress such as we have in the United States.

Japan, which used to be a very profitable market, has practically ceased to be one. China is being rapidly "underdeveloped," and will supply its own wants, and perhaps be looking for a market itself.

Now, if every nation wants to sell and no nation wants to buy--because those who want to buy CAN NOT buy--there will be a universal stagnation of industry; that is STARVATION.

Whereupon the nations will be able to make their choice between STARVATION OR SOCIALISM. This is the argument concisely stated. There is no loophole in this argument. The opponents of Socialism can't get over it; or around it. He must face it. AND HE IS FACING A STONE WALL. Herbert Spencer recognized the force of this argument, and declared Socialism to be inevitable. John Stuart Mills recognized the force of this argument, and it made him a convert to Socialism.

AND AS LONG AS THIS ARGUMENT REMAINS UNCHALLENGED SOCIALISM REMAINS UNCHALLENGED.

It is quite useless for an opponent of Socialism to try to "annihilate" Socialism by showing that it will destroy the home, the church, incentive or individuality, as long as he is unable to disprove the argument of the inevitability of Socialism.

For, if Socialism is inevitable, we may consider it a great pity if it will do any of these things. BUT IT DOES NOT BECOME ANY LESS INEVITABLE ON

THAT ACCOUNT.

Supposing an astronomer were to prove with mathematical accuracy that San Francisco was going to have another earthquake, would you try to dispose his statement by demonstrating that an earthquake was impossible BECAUSE IT WOULD DESTROY THE HOMES AND CHURCHES IN SAN FRANCISCO?

Socialism will come because the human race may consent to live for awhile and to a certain degree. BUT IT WILL NOT CONSENT TO STARVE PERPETUALLY AND TO A DEGREE HITHERTO UNKNOWN.

If the coming of Socialism will destroy the home, the church, individuality and incentive, why, then so much the worse for the home, the church, individuality and incentive.

SLUMMING REVERSED.

The visitors who knocked at the brown-stone mansion on Gold Avenue were dressed in rags and gave every visible evidence of having come from the slum districts.

The liveried servant who opened the door tried hastily to shut it, but the foremost visitor in line thrust his foot between the door and the jam, then pushed the door open with an exhibition of masculine force that made the servant gasp with astonishment.

"What's the meaning of that noise, Jobson?" queried a woman at the head of the marble stairway.

"Hi don't know mum."

"Say, youse," said the spokesman of the visiting party, "we've seen how de rich live. An' we's comin' in, too, see! An' we's goin' to pike our bloomin' noses into everythin', an' we's goin' to ask all de impudent questions we like, see!"

"This is an unwarranted intrusion and if you do not immediately leave I shall call the police," exclaimed the lady of the house, appearing upon the scene, clad in a silk kimono and other articles.

"Nope, nixey on de bulls," said the spokesman. "We's ain't no intrusion, mum. 'De's jes' returnin' a friendly call, see! A few days ago youse an' a bunch o' nobes comes over t' where we live, investigate conditions o' de poor slummin', I believe youse called it. Said youse was interested in de amelioration o' de conditions o' de workin' classes, or some such dope, an' had t' study conditions at first hand. Well, we's formed a class for t' study de conditions o' de rich, an' we's gotta have it first hand, see! We's picked out fer our first visits deams what's butted into our tenements without invitation an' made deerselves at home. So, mum, jes' send dis brass buttoned gasabo ter de scrap pile an' plot us aroun' de dump."

WRONG TO STEAL PENNIES.

A little matter that happens almost every day happened down in Georgia and seems to have attracted the attention of newspapers generally.

Anybody who pays attention to passing events knows that the fellow who steals a loaf of bread is designated as a thief, while he who steals an election is dubbed "Hon."

But the Georgia affair was evidently a little too raw for even the defenders of the present order, and the capitalist press is making a mild howl about it. The Malden Merit says of it:

"Three years ago a 9-year old Georgia boy stole a 5-cent bottle of soda-water. He was arrested and tried by a jury of big-hearted men and sentenced to serve eleven years in a reformatory. The kind-hearted judge approved the verdict and the boy was sentenced accordingly. Recently the supreme court of that state held that the verdict could not be set aside as excessive, and the boy must serve until he is of age to wipe out his error. THAT BOY MADE A MISTAKE. He should have stolen a case of soda-water and got sent up for life and a few years over. If he had looted a bank to the tune of \$100,000 he would have been a free man now, or within another year or so, at most. Just think what would have happened to the bank teller in Massachusetts who stole a quarter of a million dollars from the bank he was employed in. If he had operated in Georgia at the same rate he would have been sent up for fifty-five million years. He would have been quite an old man when his term expired. However, he was not in Georgia and escaped with a sentence of four years. He is out now, while the boy has eight more years to serve. Georgia is all right."

To me this is an old story. Don't steal pennies. Take enough to divide up with a good lawyer and, if necessary, "the court," and you are all right. Be "respectable." If your theft is so plain that there is no way around it, take a sentence. In a short while you will be "pardoned"--and then you can mix in the "best" society and enjoy your loot.

Here in Scott county we keep the jail filled with small-bore offenders who, through ignorance or necessity, take a little something in violation of the rules of the game. They are severely punished.

Two years ago, at the April court, we sent ten men to the pen to make profits for the different trusts who have branch factories at Jefferson City because of the cheap convict labor obtainable.

I called the attention of the people's lawyer to this and gave it as my opinion that the combined stealings of these men did not amount to as much as the graft handed out at a single term of our county court.

To make it so plain that the blind could see, I mentioned some specific matters. For instance, I called attention to it that a paper had been organized in which county officials were stockholders; that the year before this paper was organized it cost taxpayers only \$7 to have their annual financial statement published; that in 1910 the people paid \$120 for this notice that had cost only \$7; that these excessive sums were paid to a newspaper in which officials held stock; that the law regarding the letting of public printing was ignored, and no effort made to secure the most "advantageous terms," and so on.

What was the answer? Oh, nothing only--"detach your sewer!" "Tear down your stairs!" And a libel "snot."

And with a carefully prepared jury of which those in authority had the selection, they made the libel "snot" stick--so far as the jury could do so.

But the court set the verdict aside.

And I have a standing offer of a \$10-gold piece to any citizen, juror, or "particularly this plaintiff," who can find anything in the articles complained of that is not true, or that libels John McWilliams. But nobody seems to want the shiny piece.

STATEMENT

Of ownership, management, circulation, etc., of Scott County Kicker, published weekly at Benton, Mo., required by the act of August 24, 1912:

Editor and Manager--Phil A. Hafner, Benton, Mo.

Owners holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock--Julius Albrecht, III, Mo.; Joseph Bubs, Illmo, Mo.; P. E. Daugherty, Forneft, Mo.; John Heeb, Chaffee, Mo.; J. H. Branam, Vanduser, Mo.; Sol Diebold, Oran, Mo.; Phil A. Hafner, Benton, Mo.; Thos. J. Smith, Benton, Mo.; G. W. Minter, Benton, Missouri; Charles Oliver, Morley, Mo.; J. E. Walker, Commerce, Mo.; E. M. Daugherty, Commerce, Mo.; A. Q. Miller, Poplar Bluff, Mo.; J. Ed. Green, Blodgett, Mo.; A. E. Evans, Morley, Mo.; A. E. Cornell, Poplar Bluff, Mo.

Known bond holders, mortgages, and other security holders, holding one per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities--None.

Phil A. Hafner, Editor.
Subscribed and sworn to before me this 4th day of April, 1913.
V. L. Harrie, Notary Public.
My commission expires Jan. 7, 15

IN THE SOUTHWEST.

That there will be something doing at Forneft and Ilmo during the summer is becoming quite evident. The Cotton Belt railroad already owns quite a strip of land there and it is reported that they are now buying the lots and property south of the railroad at Forneft. It is said the railroad has bought most of the lots south of the tracks, and what they cannot buy will be condemned. The company intends to build 15 new tracks along this strip, it is said. Some of these will be laid running from Ilmo to Anell. The main-line track will be put on the south side, instead of on the north side, as now. The new depot, to be used by both towns, it is said, will be put on the south side of the tracks opposite the round house, and a big steel viaduct will be erected across the tracks somewhere near the depot. This will likely unite the towns of Ilmo and Forneft.

Dexter Messenger--That Dexter is gaining a reputation as a live poultry shipping point is evident from the fact that something like \$6,000 was paid out for chickens here Saturday. Four car loads of poultry were loaded and left Saturday evening and Sunday for Chicago and New York. This makes 16 car loads of live poultry shipped from this point since the last week in January. These cars averaged 20,000 pounds each, or a total of 320,000 pounds. At the high price poultry has been bringing for the past 60 days, this 320,000 pounds averaged over 12 cents, or in round numbers, about \$40,000 paid to the farmers of this section.

Dexter Messenger--Wm. Miller & Co. shipped from this point Sunday to the St. Louis market one of the best bunches of cattle that ever left this section. There were 80 head of prime high-grade heifers and steers in the bunch, and it took four cars to transport them to market. They averaged 1,340 pounds each and brought \$5.40 per hundred. The cattle averaged \$11.25 a head, or a little more than \$900 for the bunch. They were collected and fattened on the J. N. Miller farm south of the city.

Pemscot Argus--About noon on April 2, persons on this side saw a skiff in the river apparently trying to cross to this shore and containing a man and a woman. The waves were high and the man evidently not used to a skiff. It seemed that he had become frightened and attempted to turn and go back, but it is thought the boat overturned and both were drowned, as all traces of them were lost by the watchers on the shore.

Farmington Times--Some paper has figured that out of 1,571 bills that were introduced at the recent session of the legislature, only about one-sixth, 246, were passed. That was a good many and the state would not have suffered any material damage if the number had been less.

A section of the Frisco railroad was blown up between Lilbourn and Kewanee, in New Madrid Co., Friday night of last week, with dynamite. It is supposed that farmers whose land was being overflowed by waters held back by the dump blew up the track. Trains could go no further than Kewanee.

Up in Washington county the prosecuting attorney is prosecuting a county official for riding on railroad passes in violation of law. Evidently that prosecuting attorney does not BELONG to the party.

While attempting to board a moving freight train at Poplar Bluff Paul Tiller, a young man of Bloomfield, fell under the wheels and had his right foot cut off.

FINAL SETTLEMENT NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given to all creditors and others interested in estate of Henry Peetz, deceased, THAT I, THE UNDERSIGNED executrix of said estate, intend to make a final settlement thereof at the next term of the probate court of Scott county, Mo. to be begun and holden at the court house, in the town of Benton, said county and state, on the second Monday in August, 1913.

Meena Peetz, Executrix.

FINAL SETTLEMENT NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given to all creditors and others interested in estate of Frank Hess, deceased, THAT I, THE UNDERSIGNED administrator of said estate, intend to make a final settlement thereof at the next term of the probate court of Scott county, Mo. to be begun and holden at the court house, in the town of Benton, said county and state, on the second Monday in August, 1913.

Anton Hess, Administrator.

FINAL SETTLEMENT NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given to all creditors and others interested in the estate of Lorenz Seyer, dec'd, THAT I, THE UNDERSIGNED executor of said estate, intend to make a final settlement thereof at the next term of the probate court of Scott county, Mo. to be begun and holden at the court house, in the town of Benton, said county and state, on the second Monday in August, 1913.

Philip Seyer, Executor.